

REMARKS

At the outset, the Examiner is thanked for the thorough review and consideration of the subject application. The Non-Final Office Action of June 4, 2003 has been received and its contents carefully reviewed.

By this amendment, Applicants hereby amend claim 16 and respectfully submit no new matter has been entered.

In the Non-Final Office Action of June 4, 2003, the Examiner withdrew claim 24 from consideration as being directed to a non-elected species B according to Figure 3A; rejected claims 1, 3, 16-18, 21, and 23 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Watanabe et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,479,284); and objected to claims 2, 4, 19, 20, and 22 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The rejection of these claims is traversed and reconsideration of the claims is respectfully requested in view of the amendment to the claims and in view of the following remarks.

Preliminarily, it is noted that the "Disposition of Claims" section in the Office Action Summary of the outstanding Office Action cites claims 1-4 and 16-23 as pending within the application and that claims 4-15 and 24-27 are withdrawn from consideration. Applicants respectfully submit, however, claims 1-27 are pending within the present application. Of the currently pending claims 1-27, Applicants provisionally elected claims 1-4 and 16-24 for prosecution. Accordingly, while claims 5-15 and 25-27 are withdrawn from consideration, Applicants respectfully submit these claims remain pending within present application until they are canceled.

Applicants appreciate the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 2, 4, 19, 20, and 22, which were objected to as being dependent upon rejected base claims, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims.

The rejection of claims 1, 3, 16-18, 21, and 23 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Watanabe et al. is respectfully traversed and reconsideration is respectfully requested.

A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single reference. See M.P.E.P. § 2131.

Claim 1 is allowable over the cited references in that claim 1 recites a combination of elements including, for example, “maintaining a pressure in a liquid crystal injection chamber at a first pressure, and at the same time maintaining a liquid crystal tray contacted to a liquid crystal panel and an injection hole thereof at a first temperature, to inject a liquid crystal from said liquid crystal tray to said liquid crystal panel; increasing the pressure in said chamber to a second pressure higher than said first pressure; and maintaining said second pressure while cooling said liquid crystal panel, and at the same time, maintaining said liquid crystal tray at said first temperature.” None of the cited references, including Watanabe et al., singly or in combination, teaches or suggests at least these features of the claimed invention.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 1 and claims 2-4, which depend therefrom are also allowable over the cited references.

Claim 16 is allowable over the cited references in that claim 16 recites a combination of elements including, for example, “...at a first pressure and at a first temperature, injecting liquid crystal material from said liquid crystal tray, through said injection hole, into said

liquid crystal panel; increasing the pressure in said liquid crystal injection chamber from said first pressure to a second pressure; and cooling said liquid crystal panel from said first temperature to a second temperature while maintaining said liquid crystal tray at said first temperature...” None of the cited references, including Watanabe et al., singly or in combination, teaches or suggests at least these features of the claimed invention. Moreover, Applicants respectfully submit claim 16 is a generic claim with respect to the species of inventions defined by claims 17-27, dependent upon claim 16. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit claims 17-27 are allowable over the cited references by virtue of their dependence from allowable claim 16.

The Examiner cites Watanabe et al. as teaching at Figure 11 and column 7, line 35 – column 8, line 29, “maintaining a pressure in a liquid crystal injection chamber at a first pressure, and at the same time maintaining a liquid crystal tray contacted to a liquid crystal panel and an injection hole thereof at a first temperature, to inject a liquid crystal from said liquid crystal tray to said liquid crystal panel; increasing the pressure in said chamber to a second pressure higher than said first pressure; maintaining said second pressure while cooling said liquid crystal panel...”

Applicants respectfully submit, however, Watanabe et al. does not describe, either inherently or explicitly, at least the aforementioned combination of elements with respect to independent claims 1 and 16.

For example, at column 7, lines 36-43, Watanabe et al. states “a panel 101 preliminarily injected with a liquid crystal material but retaining some void... was fixed... so that the injection port directed downward contacted the liquid crystal material on the tray. The panel 101 in this state was subjected to heating of the liquid crystal material and

pressurization from the injection port toward the inside of the panel according to the program shown in FIG. 11.” Moreover, at column 8, lines 1-7, Watanabe et al. states “[f]irst, the interior of the chamber 103 and the plate heater 104 were heated... Then, the pressure within the chamber was increased so as to apply a pressure from the injection port toward the panel inside, thereby promoting the filling of the void in the panel with the liquid crystal material.”

In view of the above-cited disclosure of Watanabe et al., Applicants respectfully submit it is readily apparent in Figure 11 of Watanabe et al. that the liquid crystal material fills the void in the panel upon increasing the pressure (113) from the “NORMAL PRESS.” to the elevated pressure “P” after the temperature of the chamber 111 and of the plate 112 increased.

While Watanabe et al. teaches injecting liquid crystal material into a panel prior to performing the aforementioned pressure/temperature treatment outlined at column 7, lines 36-43, at column 8, lines 1-7 and at Figure 11 of Watanabe et al., Applicants respectfully submit Watanabe et al. fails to teach or suggest, either expressly or inherently, injecting liquid crystal material into a liquid crystal panel by, for example, “maintaining a pressure in a liquid crystal injection chamber at a first pressure, and at the same time maintaining a liquid crystal tray contacted to a liquid crystal panel and an injection hole thereof at a first temperature, to inject a liquid crystal from said liquid crystal tray to said liquid crystal panel,” as asserted by the Examiner.

Applicants believe the foregoing amendments place the application in condition for allowance and early, favorable action is respectfully solicited. Should the Examiner deem that a telephone conference would further the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at (202) 496-7500.

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Group Art Unit: 2871
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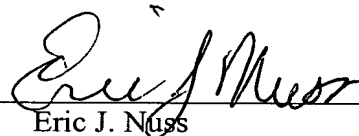
If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. §1.136. Please credit any overpayment to deposit Account No. 50-0911.

Respectfully submitted,

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